

Mansfield Agriculture Committee

Work Session on Farm Animal Regulations

Wednesday, August 15, 7:30

NOTE DIFFERENT LOCATION: Parks and RecConference Room in the Community Center

Preliminary draft based on notes from July 11, 2007 meeting

Proposed Zoning Regulations re: Keeping of Farm Animals

14. The keeping, breeding, or raising of beef or dairy cows, sheep, poultry, swine, goats, horses and other animals for either commercial or non-commercial purposes, and accessory buildings and facilities, provided the following standards are met:

A. General Criteria for Animal Agriculture

1. The number of animals shall not exceed those established in the Animal Unit Table in these regulations.
2. The land on which the animals are to be kept is capable of safely supporting the number and type of animals proposed.
3. The animals will be kept in a manner as to not create a hazard to themselves or the environment.
4. The animals are kept in a manner that conforms to all applicable regulations of the Ct. Department of Environmental Protections, the Ct. Department of Agriculture, the Public Health Code, and all applicable provisions of the State Statutes.
5. Existing facilities for the keeping of farm animals, are exempt from these regulations, and the exemption continues with the transfer of the property to a new owner. Properties abutting the Willimantic Water Reservoir, are not to be transferred with these rights. Succeeding owners shall be prohibited from keeping farm animals within 500 feet of the reservoir.

A. Standards for Keeping Farm Animals

1. Number of Animals Per Acre

- a. The minimum lot size on which farm animals may be kept shall be one acre, which may include a dwelling.

b. No more than one (1) animal unit shall be kept on each acre owned up to a total of three (3) animal units on three (3) acres. More than three animal units shall be considered Commercial Animal Agriculture and subject to the regulations governing such use. (Where are these?) The keeping of male non-neutered large animals may be kept on non-commercial properties until one (1) year of age.

c. The number and type of animal constituting an animal unit as well as the number of animals permitted by lot size is as follows:

ANIMAL UNIT TABLE to be added here

d. Combinations of different animals are permitted provided that total permitted animal units are not exceeded for the available acreage. For example, XXXX two sheep and 16 chickens would be permitted on one acre: however, 1 cow and 16 chickens would not be allowed.

2. Space Standards

a. Each animal will have free access to shelter in a building, which will provide shade and protection from wind, rain and snow. A minimum of 100 square feet of interior floor space shall be provided for each animal unit.

b. Animals shall have access to a safe and adequate outdoor enclosure compatible with their age and size. A minimum of 1,000 square feet of fenced exterior space shall be provided for each animal unit of large and medium size animals kept.

c. Fence standards: Fences will be of sufficient height, strength, and density to assure that such animals shall not escape. Fencing for pastures will be at least 10 feet from a property boundary.

3. Site Suitability and Location of Animal Facilities

a. Slope: Sites with slopes greater than 15% should be avoided to prevent heavy surface water runoff or hazardous conditions for keeping animals.

b. Drainage: Proper drainage shall be provided to avoid the collection of water. Surface water runoff shall be diverted from animal keeping areas and manure piles. Surface water runoff shall not pollute surface or subsurface water supplies, watercourses or wetlands. Manure piles shall be removed on a regular basis unless composted.

c. Animal shelters and outside keeping areas (other than pasture) shall be constructed at no less than 100 feet from any existing dwelling on adjacent property. All buildings shall be located according to the standard setback lines defined in XXXX of the zoning regulations, such as 35 feet from side lines. Such structures within a wetland review area (150 feet buffer?) shall be subject to approval of the Inland Wetland Agency.

3. Exemption? Is the following appropriate?

e. The keeping of animals comprising 20% or less of an animal unit allowed per acre is exempt from the above requirements? Example: 20% of 12 chickens per acre (2.4 chickens) would be allowed per acre without above requirements (or exempt from certain requirements?).